

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-3 are amended; claims 5 and 6 are added; Figs. 17 and 18 are labeled; and the title of the invention is amended.

I. The Drawings Satisfy all Formal Requirements

The Office Action objects to Figs. 17 and 18, asserting that the figures should be labeled as "Prior Art" "because only that which is old is illustrated." This objection is respectfully traversed.

Figs. 17 and 18 show different views of a major portion of an opposing substrate of a liquid-crystal device as disclosed in the "Description of Related Art" section of the disclosure at pages 1 and 2. The figures describe views of a related art which relates to the present invention. For example, Figs. 4, 5-7 and 9 share a similar cross-sectional view of the major portion of the opposing substrate. Accordingly, Figs. 17 and 18 are proposed to be designated by a legend --Related Art--, as corrected by the attached drawings. Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

II. The Specification Satisfies all Formal Requirements

The Office Action objects to the title of the invention. In response, the title of the invention is amended to obviate the objection. Withdrawal of the objection to the title of the invention is respectfully submitted.

III. The Claims Satisfy all Form Requirements

The Office Action objects to claim 1 for lack of antecedent basis for "effective region." In response, claim 1 is amended to obviate the objection. Withdrawal of the objection to claim 1 is respectfully requested.

IV. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fig. 17 of the application in view of JP 09-318962 to Kobayashi; claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fig. 17 of the application in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,522,378 to Mizuno et al.; claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fig. 17 of the application in view of Mizuno et al. and further in view of Kobayashi; claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fig. 17 of the application in view of U.S. Patent 5,838,411 to Hayakawa et al.; claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fig. 17 of the application in view of Hayakawa et al. and further in view of Kobayashi. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The "Description of Related Art" section of the application as shown in Fig. 17 does not teach, disclose or suggest "an electrode width of an electrode strip on a step portion forming an outline of the protective layer in the boundary part of the formation region and the unformed region being set to be narrower than an electrode width of an electrode width of an electrode strip on the protective layer in the formation region, an electrode width of an electrode strip in the unformed region being set to be wider than the electrode width of the electrode strip on the step portion," as recited in claim 1; and "an electrode width of an electrode strip in a step portion forming an outline of the protective layer in the boundary part of the formation region and the unformed region being set to be narrower than an electrode width of an electrode strip on the protective layer in the formation region by approximately 4 μ m," as recited in claim 6.

Instead, Fig. 17 shows the presence of a resist residue which generates a blur of the electrode strip 24 and the generation of a bridge 24y that causes a shorting between adjacent electrode strips 24 (specification, page 3, lines 17-25). No variation in electrode width is shown.

Hayakawa et al., Muzino et al. and Kobayashi do not make up for the deficiencies of Fig. 17 of the application. Instead, Hayakawa et al. merely discloses a segment electrode substrate 1, a common electrode substrate 2, common electrodes 8, segment electrodes 9, dummy sub-electrodes and terminals 38 and 39 for the common electrodes 8 and the segment electrodes 9 (col. 10, lines 24-31; Fig. 11); Mizuno et al. discloses interval B of 30 to 60 μm (col. 4, lines 18-30; Fig. 2); and Kobayashi shows in Fig. 7 an absence of a step portion between a formation region and an unformed region. These references do not disclose a step portion.

Furthermore, Applicant respectfully submits that the Office Action engaged in improper hindsight reconstruction based on the Applicant's disclosure of related art as a basis for obviousness-based claim rejections. Even if variously combined, the applied references do not result in the above-recited claim features.

For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is patentable over the applied references. The dependent claims are likewise patentable over the applied references for at least the reasons discussed as well as for the additional features they recite. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

V. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-6 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
Drawing Replacement Sheets (2)

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